According to the EXIM Policy, Basmati rice is allowed to be exported freely and non-basmati rice is allowed to be exported upto 10 lakh MTs during a good year of production. There is no Minimum Export Price both for Basmati and non-Basmati rice at present. The Government have taken a series of measures to create an environment which is conducive to export of agricultural commodities including Basmati rice. Some such steps are : the facility to set up 100% export oriented Units, eligibility to import capital goods on concessional duty, availability of concessional credit, simplification of pre-shipment inspection procedures etc.

The Indian Exports of Basmati rice are Competitive inter-nationally and have been showing sustained growth for the last few years. Indian non-Basmati Superfine rice is, however, not very competitive internationally at present. The following quantities of Basmati rice and non-Basmati rice (approximately). has been exported for the last few years :—

(Figs. in Lakh Tonnes)

Year	Basmati rice	Non-Basmati rice
1991-92	2.57	4.12
1992-93	3.25	2.56
1993-94	5.36	2.69
1994-95 (upto Oct.)	2.60	0.45

Corruption in FCI

1545. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item captioned : "It's bureaucrats vs public in FCI" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated 28th September, 1994 wherein it has been stated that (i) foodgrains worth FOUR LAKH TONNES have disappeared from the public distribution system being managed by the FCI within last one month; (ii) transition losses have mounted without any action being taken by the FCI; (iii) there is complete chaos in the administration of the FCI; (iv) there is no account of Rs. 1.25 crore of the provident fund of the FCI employees; (vi) the top officials of FCI have granted for themselves perquisites which even very senior officials are not entitled to in Government; (vi) there is corruption in the FCI;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the points stated above; and

(c) what is the proposal to get these allegations verified by an independent agency ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The various items mentioned against part (a) of the question are dealth with in seriatum as under : —

(i) No, Sir.

(ii) No, Sir. In fact there has been a decline in losses because of persistent efforts made by FCI. As a result of these efforts, the overall losses have come down from 1.49% in the year 91-92 to 0.95% (provisional) during 1993-94.

(iii) No, Sir, The Food Corporation of India is functioning smoothly.

(iv) 2 cases of defalcation of Rs. 59.87 lakhs from CPF accounts have been noticed recently and taking into account the interest element upto 31-3-1994 the amount comes to Rs. 1.26 crores. The Board of Directors of FCI has approved the reimbursement of the said amount to the CPF Trust. The cases of defalcatin have been entrusted to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

(v) The top officials of the Corporation are granted perquisites based on the guidelines of the Government.

(vi) Instances of corruption whenever they come to the notice of the Corporation are being dealt with promptly.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b), there is no proposal to get the allegations verified by an independent agency.

Use of Airstrips for Storing Stocks of Foodgrains

1546. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to utilise several airstrips in the country, which are in a State of disuse at present for storing the stocks of procured foodgrains;